

Public Notice
Review of Colorado River Water Quality Standards
Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum
July 2008

BACKGROUND

In 1975, the seven Colorado River Basin States adopted water quality standards with respect to salinity for the entire Colorado River Basin in the United States (Basin). This was required under the then newly enacted Clean Water Act. Every three years the seven Basin states (AZ, CA, CO, NM, NV, UT, & WY) through their organization, the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum (Forum), have reviewed these standards in compliance with the provisions of the Clean Water Act.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Forum has recently approved a draft of the *2008 Review, Water Quality Standards For Salinity, Colorado River System* (Review). The Forum and each of the Basin states are providing an opportunity for public comments on this Review. The draft Review can be seen on either of the two websites: www.waterquality.utah.gov/PublicNotices or www.ColoradoRiverSalinity.org. Written public comments can be submitted to: John Whitehead, Forum Member, Utah Division of Water Quality, P.O. Box 144870, Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4870 or by e-mail at: jwhitehead@utah.gov. The deadline to receive comments is close of business August 29, 2008. If you have questions concerning this effort, please contact Jeff Studenka at (801) 538-6779 or by e-mail at: jstudenka@utah.gov.

OTHER INFORMATION

In general, the findings of the Review are that salinity concentrations in the Colorado River are below the numeric criteria, there is little chance of concentrations in the near term going above the numeric criteria and there is no need to change the numeric criteria. The Review also finds that the salinity load in the river has been reduced by 1,080,100 tons a year and with the proposed plan of implementation the salinity load would be reduced by 1,864,600 by the year 2030. With the plan of implementation in place, the probability of exceeding the numeric criteria below Hoover Dam, below Parker Dam or at Imperial Dam in 2030 is 3% or less. Damages due to the use of Colorado River water in the Lower Basin remain high. The Review states that the Forum and the Basin states intend to continue their support of an aggressive salinity control program.